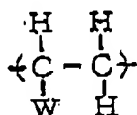


(B) Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown in the following listing of claims:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Previously presented): A functionalized polymer consisting of repeating units represented by the following formula:



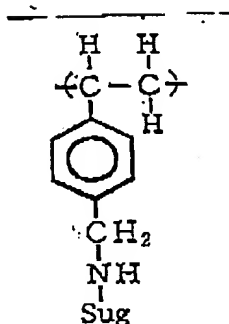
wherein, W denotes a carbohydrate chain including a structure corresponding to at least a portion of the basic skeletal structure of a glycosaminoglycan and comprising 2-50 constituent disaccharide units having an average of at least one sulfate group.

Claims 2, 4-13, 15-19, 21 and 22 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Previously presented): A functionalized polymer in accordance with claim 1, characterized in that said glycosaminoglycan is heparin, heparan sulfate, chondroitin sulfate, dermatan sulfate or a desulfated modification thereof.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): A functionalized polymer in accordance with claim 1 wherein said functionalized polymer has a morphology in aqueous medium comprising a core composed of the polymer main chain and said carbohydrate chains W spread out from said core in said medium.

Claim 20 (Previously presented): A functionalized polymer in accordance with claim 1, wherein said repeating units are represented by the following formula:



wherein Sug indicates a structure corresponding to at least a portion of the basic skeletal structure of a glycosaminoglycan and comprising 2-50 constituent disaccharide units having an average of at least one sulfate group.

23. (Previously presented): A functionalized polymer in accordance with claim 1 comprising cell growth factors bound to said carbohydrate chains W.

24. (Previously presented): A functionalized polymer in accordance with claim 1 comprising molecules bound to said carbohydrate chains W, said molecules being selected from the group consisting of cell growth factors, cytokines, vascular growth factors, and fibroblast growth factors.

25. (Previously presented): A functionalized polymer in accordance with claim 14 comprising molecules bound to said carbohydrate chains W, said molecules being selected from the group consisting of cell growth factors, cytokines, vascular growth factors, and fibroblast growth factors.

26. (Previously presented): A functionalized polymer in accordance with claim 1 wherein said carbohydrate chain W is a natural, chemically decomposed glycosaminoglycan having an aldehyde functional group that is bonded to the polymer main chain via Schiff bonding or a coupling agent.

27. (New) A functionalized polymer in accordance with claim 1 prepared by a method comprising bonding a chemically decomposed natural glycosaminoglycan to the polymer main chain via a functional group formed by said chemical decomposition, thereby forming said carbohydrate chain W as said chemically decomposed natural glycosaminoglycan bound to the polymer main chain.